

Reestablishing normal life. How patients with Multiple Sclerosis and Stroke experience a nursing intervention to enhance mobility.

Susanne Suter-Riederer, PhD cand., MScN, RN^{1,2}, Wilfried Schnepf², PhD, RN, Lorenz Imhof, PhD, RN.

¹Zürich University of Applied Sciences, Institut of Nursing, Winterthur, Switzerland.

²Witten/Herdecke University, School of Nursing Science, Witten, Germany.

³Nursing Science & Care, Winterthur, Switzerland.

Background

A nursing intervention to enhance mobility (MENI) of MS and stroke patients, the so called «Bodenpflege», was tested in a randomised controlled trial (RCT). Functionality, quality of life and the risk of nursing care after discharge improved significantly. But the RCT design did not explain how the intervention influenced patient's daily life. Therefore a qualitative study was realised to describe how patients experience MENI and how the intervention affect their daily life.

Mobility Enhancing Nursing Intervention (MENI) (Source: Kliniken Valens)



Method

- Open interviews with 61 participants of the intervention group.
- Qualitative analysis based on the interpretive, phenomenological method (Benner and Heidegger).

Results

The intervention MENI, with its unknown movement sequences from the ground floor to a wheelchair, and vice versa, increased uncertainty at the beginning. However, the close link to daily life activities to negotiate the learning process with nurses, and to become involved in decisions were building

blocks of a new normality. Training was one of three practices patients used to build normality. The others were to develop new movement skills together with nurses, and to reconcile with a changing life. When these practices were successful, patients were talking about increased confidence, feelings of security, relaxation, and joy to move.

Discussion

Patients experienced a learning process from losing daily routine to establishing a new normal life. The relationship to nurses, being actively involved, as well as shared skills and knowledge, were helpful elements of this process. Other studies found similar results. Restoration of functions does not guarantee an improved normal life. In addition the care environment has to enable patients to experience a sense of security, belonging, continuity, achievement, purpose and significance. MENI offers such an environment in addition to the therapeutic exercises.

Implications for practice and research

- Close relationship to patients and knowing their illness experience are key elements of patient centered care.
- Nurses are challenged to assess, understand, and integrate the patient's lifeworld into their work.
- Nurses' therapeutic work, including patient centeredness and negotiation process, should become more recognised in interdisciplinary practice and research. This could improve the interdisciplinary potential in rehabilitation.

References

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Contact: susanne.suter-riederer@zhaw.ch

